



AGM and MEMBERS EVENING

The 2001 Annual General Meeting was well attended and went relatively smoothly.

Phyllis Rouston gave a report on the year's activities which had included guest talks, walks, a field trip to Scotland and training activities. The year had its ups and downs. We had a meeting in February when the speaker did not turn up and two field trips were cancelled due to poor response. However other events did prove popular including the trip to Caerlaverock, a day surveying on Brackenber Moor and some excellent talks on practical archaeology in the Autumn. The focus of the group has perhaps been changing this year as we have held four meetings in order to plan our own practical project. These sessions have been well attended and very productive so far. The practical side of the group will be developed further this year. We will continue to try and provide a good mixture of events to suit most interests but we are always happy to receive feedback from members on what they would like to get out of the group.

David Kay gave this year's financial report. We have been successful in keeping our head above water but only just! It has become clear over the past two years that we are not generating enough income to really cover our costs. The committee will be looking into ways of improving our finances this year. However the issue of subscriptions raised last year was addressed at the meeting and all felt that an increase in subscription rates was necessary. The meeting voted for an increase of £2 per person raising an

individual subscription to £7 and joint subscriptions to £12 per year. I think this is still good value considering it covers the cost of four newsletters, six talks and various other activities each year. I hope you will agree and join us for another year. Subscriptions are now due and a form is included with this newsletter.

Related to this a change has now been made to our constitution in order to simplify matters. Section 6B which did read: "Subscriptions will be levied once a year at the beginning of the month when members initially joined." now reads: "Subscriptions will be levied once a year in January. New members joining in October, November or December will not be expected to renew their subscription until the second January after the join."

Following the financial deliberations I gave a brief chairmans report. The past year has been one of consolidation for the group which is still fairly new (this is our fourth year). The committee has become stronger with the addition of two new members, David Kay and Harry Hawkins. Membership has remained steady at 57 individuals. However we could do more to attract new people to the group and the appointment of a new publicity officer would be a great asset.

Which brings me onto the election of officers.

The committee now consists of the following members:
 Harry Hawkins (Vice-Chairman)
 David Kay (Treasurer)
 Martin Railton (Chairman)
 Phyllis Rouston (Secretary)

We are in need of a publicity person and would like to hear from any member who is interested in joining us. We are a small friendly committee and only meet four times a year so it is not a huge commitment. If you can help please give me a ring.

Following the AGM two members, Patricia Crompton and Harry Hawkins, gave talks about their practical experiences of archaeology last summer. Tricia spoke of excavating on Shetland with Bradford University where the remains of an Iron Age broch and wheelhouses aware being investigated. Harry joined a summer school in June looking at landscape in the Eden Valley and spent time exploring the Kirkland area. He gave convincing evidence that a settlement of some kind exists close to Kirkland on the fell bottom, but he admits further research is needed.

I hope that other members will be encouraged to get involved in our activities this year and that we can make it the best yet. Archaeology continues to grow in popularity but is not always easy to approach as it is mostly dominated by professional organizations. I feel it is important that archaeology should be made accessible to all and I hope that our group is going some way towards achieving that aim.

Martin Railton



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Roman Frenchfields and Carlisle Castle Green

At the November meeting the Appleby Archaeology Group learned more about the Romans in Cumbria from Gerry Martin, Carlisle Archaeology Unit, who spoke about recent archaeological discoveries at Frenchfields near Penrith and Castle Green, Carlisle.

At Frenchfields two fields to the north of the A66 were studied. Nothing was removed from the site as there was no digging, but everything that was seen was recorded. The topsoil which had been removed to expose parts of the site was later replaced to preserve the archaeology.

Aerial photography had indicated a road and rectilinear structures. The Roman road which was up to 8 metres wide, running east to west on the line of Scotch Corner to Carlisle was located with evidence of buildings on either side. The buildings on the north of the road appeared to be of a higher quality than those on the south. Was this because they faced south? Ditches were identified which could have been field boundaries. In the field nearer the A66 remains of walls, cobbles, flagged yards and roads were seen as was a well preserved cesspit which had been backfilled with blackened sandstone, which could indicate that the area was cleared by fire. A modern land drain was removed which enabled the archaeologists to look at the stratigraphy. Only surface pottery was found dating to 2nd-4th centuries.

Gerry explained that a possible interpretation of the site was that it was the vicus for the nearby fort at Brougham. The site shows no evidence of later occupation.

Gerry then explained that in contrast to the five millennium excavations at Carlisle Castle Green, are rescue archaeology prior to development. Material is removed as the archaeologists dig down through the layers enabling them to gain insight into the occupation of the site over a period of time. Everything is recorded for future reconstructions. These excavation have provided information about the size and location of the Roman fort, some of

"a possible interpretation of the site was that it was the vicus for the nearby fort at Brougham."

which lies beneath the medieval castle, and of its continued use throughout the centuries.

He mentioned that there was some evidence of pre-Roman occupation and occupation during the Dark Ages. There appears to be continuity of use with the Roman substructures lasting into the early Middle Ages. The Anglians probably adapted what was there to their own use. There is more evidence of medieval activity; ditches 15m wide and 6m deep were found separating the castle from the city. In a smaller ditch there was a well preserved revetment of posts and wattle. Massive post holes were found which might indicate the supports for a bridge. Posts dividing off the medieval properties could be seen, and there were signs that a medieval road ran over the Roman via principia.

Gerry spoke in detail about the Roman occupation.

The original fort built 73-74 AD was built of wood but there is evi-

dence of a complicated sequence of building. There may then have been a period of abandonment perhaps at the time of the Scottish campaign before stone foundations were laid. It seems that there was a massive reorganization of the fort at the end of the 2nd Century.

The timber buildings were well preserved and are dated 73-105. This was illustrated by slides of floor timbers, wattle with the remains of plaster, foundations of timber buildings, drains made from oak and alder and a water pipe supported at points by cobbles to ensure its gradient. Other organic material was found including quantities of tent leather, shoes and the base of a barrel.

The via principia running east to west was located. This road appears to have continued in use to the 11th century. Remains of the headquarters buildings, the principia were identified. An inscription on a stone suggests that it was built by the 6th Legion. This building would have been at the centre of the fort. Over the centuries modifications were made, for example a hypocaust was added in the 4th century.

Remains of the barracks consisting of regular cells were found on either side of the dual carriageway; some rooms had flue tiles indicating some comfort for the soldiers. A 2nd century smithy was found beneath the barracks which tests suggest this may have been a finishing area for metal work.

Before taking question from the floor Gerry said that strategic position of this site has meant that it has been an important location over the centuries. PHYLLIS ROUSTON

SPRING EVENTS

PREHISTORIC LANDSCAPES



Bronze Age Upland Landscapes

Appleby Grammar School
Tuesday 1st May 7.00pm

Jamie Quartermain from the Lancaster University Archaeology Unit will be giving a talk about the prehistoric settlement of the Cumbrian uplands. Recent research has shed light on Bronze Age field patterns and the purpose of cairn fields.

The Kilmartin Valley

A prehistoric landscape Field Trip 11th-13th May

A WEEKEND INTO THE PAST!! Come with us to Kilmartin Glen, in Argyll, which has the greatest concentration of Prehistoric monuments in Scotland, including the Largie Standing Stones, the stone and timber circles at Temple Wood and dozens of cairns, and henges. The Glen is world famous for rock carvings and at Achnabreck, has the largest cluster of Cup and Rings marks in Britain.

There is also a new museum at the Centre for Archaeology and Landscape Interpretation at Kilmartin House (adm £3.90).

The Plan is to travel up by cars on Friday, 11 May and return on Sunday. Yes, it is a long way, but it is worth it!

In order to please as many people for some of the time there is a selection of accommodation from a bunk in a very basic boathouse on Loch Sween, cost a small contribution and hewing wood, the Youth Hostel in Inveraray at £8 (but it is some 34 miles further on to get to the Glen) and guest houses in Lochgilhead and Kilmartin from £17 B&B. However, details of travel and accommodation will depend on who wishes to come and their requirements.

For further details and to book a place telephone Harry Hawkins on 01768 864340.

Bronze Age Cairns

on Askham Fell

Guided Walk

Saturday 21st April 1.00pm

Another chance explore the Bronze Age landscape of Askham Fell including the Cockpit stone circle. Walking is moderately easy with fine views over Ullswater. Approximately 2 hours.

Follow the road from Askham to Helton. Turn right through the village onto the fell road. Drive 1 mile onto fell. Park at grid reference NY497 214.

Archaeology Conference

University of Lancaster

Saturday 3rd March

The 28th conference on archaeology is being held by the Centre for North-West regional studies at the university and consists of a full day of talks on local archaeology. Tickets cost £13. For further details contact the centre on 01524 593770.



An Introduction to Landscape History

A talk by Richard Hazelhurst

At the December meeting the group enjoyed an enthusiastic introduction to landscape history from Richard Hazelhurst of Temple Sowerby.

Mr Hazelhurst began by showing a number of photographs of local landscape to illustrate its variety and to emphasize that the Cumbrian landscape is not just that of the picture postcard image of the Lakes. He spoke of the changes occurring all the time and how the landscape grows and develops with the activities of humans and nature. He explained that landscape history is about looking around at all the evidence to build up a picture of how the past has affected what we see today.

He continued by giving an overview of the many factors and features that help us understand landscape history. The geological record is the starting point as this gives insight into potential land use. For example the deposition of minerals led to mining, the rich valleys good agricultural land. Looking at ecology of the countryside gives

clues to its past, the distribution of bracken may indicate grazing patterns, and the scarcity of ancient woodland suggests clearance.

He then talked of some of the features that have changed the landscape over the centuries. Evidence of industry in the stone age is seen in the production of polished stone axes from Langdale. The stone axes which were polished by grinding with St Bees sandstone are found in different parts of the country. In order for people to work on the high fells they must have cleared woodland for fire and shelter thus altering the landscape.

The Romans by their building of fortifications, roads and wall added features which have now become part of our landscape. After the Romans left the country was subject to a number of invasions, all left their mark.

The last invasion was that of the Normans and they made dramatic changes in the landscape with their large estates and religious founda-

tions. Their buildings most notably churches and castles remain prominent features of the landscape today.

Other features which provide clues to the history of the landscape were mentioned. These include the layout of towns and villages; the types of field boundaries; the distribution of lime kilns; the style of the farm buildings and houses many of which were built and developed at times of relative peace and prosperity in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. More modern changes in the cumbrian landscape are often the result of industrial changes, examples cited were iron mining, the nuclear industry and the development of transport systems from canals to the motorway. They all create new landscape features.

In conclusion Mr Hazelhurst emphasized that everything we see is part of the landscape and that the landscape historian must view an area in its entirety to begin to understand the changes that have taken place over the centuries.

Phyllis Rouston

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